



President

Leadership Profile

Winter 2023



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

The Chancellor of the Connecticut State College & Universities (CSCU) invites nominations and applications for the position of President of Eastern Connecticut State University (Eastern).

Named the best public regional university in New England by US News and World Report for five years in a row, Eastern Connecticut State University provides a strong liberal arts foundation that focuses on developing the full potential of each student. Eastern offers an exemplary undergraduate liberal arts and science curriculum, with distinctive professional and master's programs that grow out of a commitment to intellectual integrity and social responsibility. Eastern emphasizes life-long learning in a time of social and technological change. The university serves as an important resource for meeting social, economic, and cultural needs of the local and regional communities. More about the university can be found here: www.easternct.edu.

One of Eastern's primary strengths is the connection between faculty and students throughout the educational experience in a residential campus atmosphere. With an enrollment of 3,990 full-time and part-time students from every region of the state, 29 states and 7 foreign countries, Eastern is a diverse community of faculty, staff and learners committed to outstanding education for students of all backgrounds. Among Eastern's strongest measures are its first-year retention rate of 84%; more than 40% of classes having less than 20 students; a student-faculty ratio of 15 to 1; and more than 38% of first-year students graduating in the top 25% of their high school class. In 2022, 74% of the graduates had either secured employment or were accepted to graduate school by commencement day in May. Eastern offers a wide range of traditional academic programs, and degrees on three academic levels: Associate of Science, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Social Work, Bachelor of General Studies, and Master of Science.

Founded in 1889, Eastern is the second oldest of the Connecticut State Universities. The 184-acre campus is in the heart of eastern Connecticut, in a residential section of Windham County, midway between New York and Boston, and only a short drive to Hartford, the state's capital. The university serves as a highly valued partner and contributor to the social, economic, and cultural wellbeing of the surrounding community and the state overall.

Eastern is one of six member institutions of the Connecticut State Colleges & Universities system which provide affordable, innovative, and rigorous programs for students to achieve their personal and career goals as well as contribute to the economic growth of Connecticut. Building on existing assets and current successes, Eastern is now positioned to create new paradigms for delivering 21st-century education and service models that are relevant to today's students and responsive to the needs of industries, regional workforce development, and state-wide economic objectives.

The future leader of Eastern will need to concentrate on expanding the accessibility of its educational offerings, with a goal to serve as many Connecticut residents as possible. An integral part of this strategy will be to enhance engagement with adult and professional learners, and to extend its reach to more out-of-state and international students. These initiatives will position Eastern to effectively address the present educational landscape and to be well-prepared for emerging trends and challenges in higher education.

In collaboration with CSCU Chancellor Terrence Cheng, the Board of Regents, and the leadership of CSCU system institutions, Eastern is at the forefront of ensuring that these initiatives not only contribute to the success of its students but also enhance the system's national prominence. Through these collective efforts, Eastern reaffirms its commitment to excellence, inclusivity, and the advancement of education for the benefit of all Connecticut residents and beyond.

Eastern seeks in its next president the vision, organizational leadership experience, integrity, commitment to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion, communication, and interpersonal skills to join the community in building on an extraordinary legacy of excellence in public liberal arts education. The ability to lead the university's fundraising efforts is essential. An advanced degree is required.

More about how to apply can be found at the end of this document.

The Role of the President

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of Eastern, reports to the Chancellor of CSCU, and has broad responsibilities, including:

- Advising the CSCU Chancellor and Board of Regents on the needs of the campus and its students.
- Overseeing university-wide delivery of strong academic programs, equitable, and outstanding educational student experiences and administrative strategies that lead to sustainability and effectiveness.
- Conducting university-wide strategic planning.
- Advocating for state funding and policies that support public higher education.
- Overseeing the achievement of university-wide performance goals in accordance with their adopted performance accountability plans.
- Providing academic, administrative, and student affairs leadership to the campus.
- Providing the Board of Regents with updates at its regularly scheduled meetings and outside the meeting schedule whenever appropriate.

In conjunction with – and at the direction of – the CSCU Chancellor, Eastern's President is expected to implement strategies and plans to ensure financial and enrollment sustainability that also foster collaboration with other universities and partnerships with corporations and non-profit organizations for the advancement of public higher education in Connecticut. The President is expected to reinforce the university's financial health, ensure investment in infrastructure, both physical and human capital, lead Eastern on its pathway to excellence, and advance outstanding educational outcomes and educational experience for students.

Direct reports include:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Vice President for Institutional Advancement
- Vice President for Equity & Diversity
- Chief Information Officer
- Chief Human Resources Officer
- Executive Director of the Institute for Sustainability

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

Amplify the value of liberal arts and science education at Eastern and beyond

The only public liberal arts college in Connecticut and a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), Eastern is distinguished by its longstanding mission to provide excellent, affordable, outstanding liberal arts education to students from all backgrounds. Its mission attracts highly talented, dedicated faculty and

staff devoted to its student-focused educational programs. The teacher-scholar model is deeply valued, and undergraduates are encouraged to engage in research. The university continues to evolve to meet the needs of society by developing new programs and will be launching a new core curriculum in 2024. With the value and purpose of liberal arts education under scrutiny across the nation, Eastern's next president must continue to identify ways to support its mission while stridently advocating for continued relevance of liberal arts education as essential for the future of the world.

Advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as consistent elements across the university

Eastern's next president will join one of the most diverse higher education communities in the state of Connecticut and one that has long been committed to the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging. Their primary focus will be on enhancing Eastern's established culture of inclusivity and belonging by thoroughly evaluating Eastern's present state and developing and implementing effective strategies to advance these important values. The president will work closely with the Chief Diversity Officer and other campus partners to fully align the university's mission with diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Reinforce a culture of trust, respect, and transparency

Eastern is characterized by a tightly knit community, longstanding dedicated employees, and an organizational culture built on transparent communication and respect for shared governance and the university's collective bargaining units. The community seeks a president who will develop genuine, productive relationships with Eastern's constituents through engagement, recognition of their contributions and gifts, sharing of information, and open, honest communication about issues facing the university. The challenges facing Eastern, the CSCU system, and all higher education require the collective creativity, courage, and talent of the entire organization. Eastern seeks a president who will inspire and encourage the community to test new ideas, take risks, and respect tradition and history while adapting to new realities. Eastern seeks a president who can build community by modeling transparency, collaboration, and consultation with multiple constituencies in solving for the university's challenges, always with student success at the center of every decision.

Ensure financial sustainability

Under the leadership of the current president, Eastern's strong recruitment profile and history of disciplined stewardship of financial resources have contributed to a strong outlook for the coming years. Eastern has been rigorously managing costs while building reserves within a constrained state budget situation. The next president will be expected to continue strategic management of its resources while also delving into the investigation and creation of new programs underpinned by new business models. Such initiatives will increase investment in the people, programs, and services that exemplify outstanding public liberal arts education. The university must also practice vigilance, best practices, and innovation in its student recruitment efforts with particular emphasis on expanding its digital marketing to capture a broader prospective student audience beyond Connecticut.

Forge external and internal strategic relationships and partnerships

All CSCU campuses play critical roles in the communities they serve. The Windham and Willimantic communities deeply value the longstanding role and contributions of Eastern and initiatives like Eastern's Center for Community Engagement. Business, government, and civic leaders will welcome a president who is not just active and prominent in community life, but one who also fosters partnerships and strategic relationships that benefit both the university and the local community. This includes strengthening K-12 partnerships and enhancing dual and concurrent enrollment programs, positioning Eastern as a leader to be a leader in this domain. Furthermore,

the president will represent the university in dialogues with industry leaders to expand its economic impact, thereby promoting the community's economic, social, and cultural well-being.

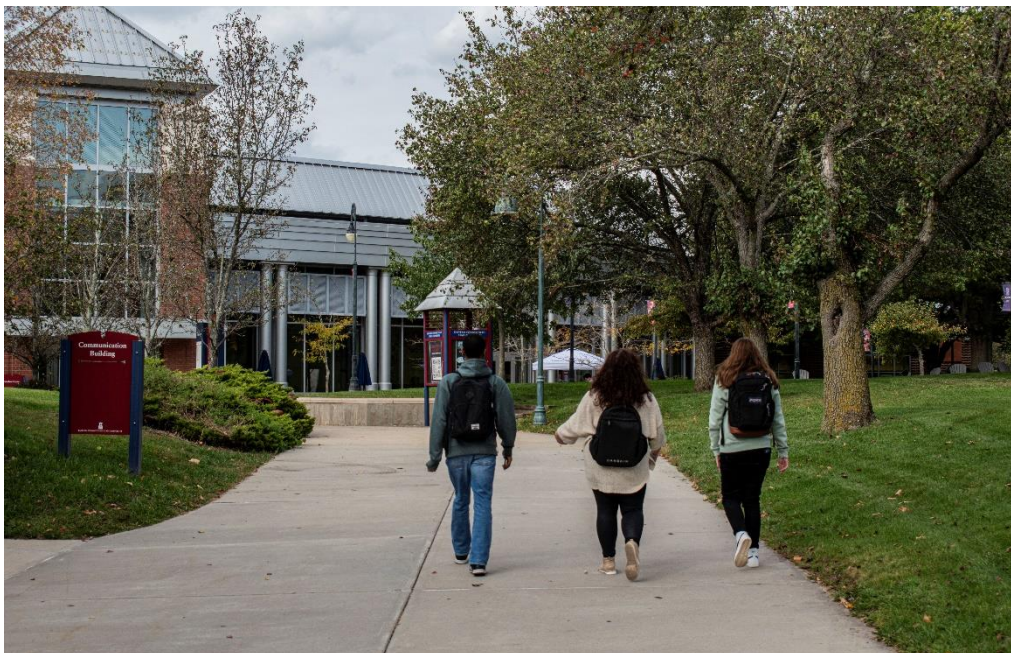
In addition, Eastern's next president will be expected to actively engage and collaborate with the broader CSCU community, demonstrating a commitment to "systemness". While preserving Eastern's unique identity and strengths, the next president will also need to contribute to the collective success of CSCU. This will involve working closely with the leaders of other CSCU institutions and the System Office to develop, execute, and advance shared initiatives and goals. These efforts will be aimed to ensure growth and innovation across the system and are critical in fostering a cohesive educational environment that benefits students, faculty, staff, and the state as a whole.

Plan and execute an advancement strategy

With a tight state budget situation and competitive enrollment environment, Eastern must identify non-tuition sources of revenue to continue to supplement its budget. The university's marketing and communication strategy must effectively promote the university's strengths and opportunities for support to the broadest possible audience of alumni, friends, legislators, and donors. The next president will be expected to advocate for and advance the university's priorities within a comprehensive advancement strategy, work closely with the ECSU Foundation to execute a fundraising strategy, and personally lead efforts to cultivate donors and raise funds.

Advocate for the CSCU System

Serving more than 85,000 students from every one of the state's 169 municipalities, CSCU provides \$11 billion in positive economic impact for the state and a high-quality education that is accessible and the most affordable in Connecticut. It is the collective responsibility of CSCU leaders to advocate for continued state investment in the system. Top priorities are an increase in operating support which has been relatively flat since 2007 primarily due to the growth in the state's fringe benefit costs, and a vision and funding for the physical infrastructure of CSCU campuses for the next decade. The president of Eastern is expected to work collaboratively with system leadership and fellow presidents to both advocate for investment in public higher education and to identify and implement innovations and initiatives that reduce cost and increase value and success.



Professional Qualities and Personal Characteristics

Eastern seeks an effective leader who is committed to ensuring the university's continued success. This individual will demonstrate ability to achieve the following:

- Continue pursuing a vision and strategy that serves as the foundation for Eastern's long-term success as an outstanding public liberal arts college serving students and the region
- Address short-term challenges, leverage institutional strengths, and engage the community in solving problems
- Build a successful and talented academic, student affairs, and administrative senior leadership team
- Collaborate effectively with the CSCU's chancellor, an exciting new generation of CSCU leadership serving on the Chancellor's Cabinet, and presidents from the others state universities, Charter Oak State College, and system office executives to sustain and strengthen the power and value of the Connecticut State College and University system
- Build and sustain strategic, mutually beneficial relationships with Connecticut's top senior leaders in the public, private, and civic sectors
- Advance Eastern's recognition as a successful, innovative leader in its class
- Attract the resources Eastern needs to invest in its future

Required qualifications:

- An advanced degree from an accredited institution
- Significant leadership and administrative experience within a complex organization, including evidence of developing and implementing strategic plans
- Effective transparent communication skills
- Ability to recruit and lead an outstanding leadership team
- Budgetary and financial acumen
- Vision for and commitment to the mission of public liberal arts education
- Well-developed relationship building skills coupled with potential for/evidence of ability to lead fundraising efforts
- Commitment to the values of diversity, equity and inclusion, coupled with demonstrated evidence of advancing these values in an institutional setting
- Dedication to student success and academic excellence

Preferred qualifications:

- Experience in higher education leadership
- Respect for and ability to engage constituents across an organization regardless of their position
- Superb oral and written communication skills
- Ability to encourage and tap innovation and creativity
- Keen marketing instincts and experience leading organizations that have built sustainable enrollment or market share, specific understanding of strategic use of digital marketing

- Data-based decision-making skills
- Patience and empathy
- Experience working within a collective bargaining environment
- Curiosity, empathy, and approachability
- Understanding and knowledge of the issues facing public higher education



About Eastern Connecticut State University

Eastern Connecticut State University is a residential campus of 3,990 students, with almost 3,200 full-time undergraduates. In addition to attracting students from 159 of Connecticut's 169 towns, Eastern draws students from 29 other states and 7 other countries. Eastern offers students a strong liberal arts foundation grounded in an array of applied learning opportunities, with 41 majors and 65 minors.

<https://www.easternct.edu/accreditation.html>

<https://www.easternct.edu/planning-and-institutional-research/accreditation.html>

<https://www.easternct.edu/graduate-division/accreditation/index.html>

Mission Statement

Eastern Connecticut State University engages students from diverse backgrounds in a transformative, liberal arts learning experience that provides knowledge and skills to lead enriching, purposeful lives.

Vision

Aspiring to be a public liberal arts college of first choice, Eastern Connecticut State University will create an unparalleled college experience for its students and achieve national distinction for its academic programs. Eastern's faculty, students and staff will enhance the University's position as an intellectual community, acknowledged for its engaged teaching, learning, research, and creative work. Advancing its position as a model for social responsibility, environmental stewardship, and educational access, the University will be recognized as a resource that is responsive to the needs of the region and the state.

Core Values

As members of a learning and teaching community committed to academic excellence, the faculty, students, staff, and administration of Eastern Connecticut State University, the state's public liberal arts university, share this set of values:

- **Academic Excellence:** Eastern embraces rigorous academic standards and intellectual inquiry as a benchmark for all of its students, faculty, and staff. This expectation informs every mode of learning on campus, from individual courses and degree programs to university presentations and cultural events.
- **Engagement:** Members of the university community develop intellectually, creatively, and socially through active and reflective learning in and outside the classroom, interdisciplinary studies, and individual and collaborative research.
- **Inclusion:** Eastern is committed to providing educational access while building a campus community that embraces diversity and differences, enriched by a global perspective.
- **Integrity:** Members of the University community are expected to behave ethically and honorably. Learning encompasses both intellectual and character development.
- **Empowerment:** Eastern fosters a safe, nurturing environment that promotes intellectual curiosity, student achievement, and lifelong learning. Through rigorous inquiry and personal interaction, members of the community grow confident as independent, critical thinkers.
- **Social Responsibility:** Social responsibility is promoted and encouraged at Eastern through serving those in need; being active in the community; protecting our natural resources; and engaging in the democratic political process and other socially responsible actions. Social responsibility includes an ethical commitment to oneself and the community at large.

Academics

Eastern offers a range of academic programs for students seeking undergraduate degrees, graduate programs, and continuing studies opportunities. More than 40 majors range from accounting to theatre, with 65 minors providing exciting choices to students as they combine career aspirations and diverse interests. Graduate degrees include accounting, education, and organizational management. Part-time adult learners have a variety of options through the Office of Continuing Studies and Enhanced Learning.

Eastern's teaching faculty is known for its commitment to personalizing instruction and guiding student success. In addition, support offices and services ranging from academic advising to tutoring, internships, and leadership programs provide students with academic support and engaging out-of-classroom opportunities.

Academic Schools / Offices

- [School of Arts and Sciences](#)
- [School of Education & Professional Studies](#)
- [Graduate Division](#)
- [Special Programs](#)

Fall 2023 Enrollments Total: 3,990

- Full-time undergraduates: 3,850
- From 29 states
- From 7+ foreign nations
- 159 of the 169 Connecticut cities
- 92% of students are from Connecticut
- 84% of first-year students live on campus
- 59% of all undergraduates live on campus

Facts at a Glance:

- 184 acres; more than 60 buildings
- Student/Faculty Ratio: 15:1
- Average Class Size: 22
- Female/male ratio: 59/41
- Students of color:
 - Total: 30 percent
 - First-year students: 35 percent
- 2023-24 Student Costs (tuition, fees, room/board)
 - In-state: \$33,468
 - New England resident: \$36,800
 - All other out-of-state students: \$46,744
- 72% of all students receive financial aid awards

Faculty and Staff

- Full-time faculty: 160
- Full-Time staff: 381
- Lecturers: 210
- Student workers: 429
- Collective bargaining units: 7

Student Life

- 13 on-campus residence halls
- More than 90 student clubs
- More than 2,500 events a year
- NCAA Division III Varsity Athletics

Campus Culture

Eastern students enjoy more than 2,500 events a year, ranging from guest speakers to live concerts featuring some of the world's top performers. An on-campus art gallery, cultural events that bring artists, performers, and lecturers from diverse cultures; a student-run radio station, student-run television programs; and much more to create a lively campus culture that is entertaining, culturally enriching, and educational.



Athletics

By placing its highest priority on the overall quality of the liberal arts educational experience, Eastern Connecticut State University's Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, Intramurals & Recreation seeks to integrate its programs and goals with academic and developmental objectives and to assure the assimilation of student-athletes into the general student body. To achieve this end:

- Eastern offers a broad-based, Division III athletic program aimed at safeguarding the amateur aspects of the various sports and maintaining the proper perspective of athletics within the academic mission of the University.
- Eastern encourages male and female students from all backgrounds to participate in some component of the athletic program to develop their full potential, so they may contribute more effectively to our society and live richer, fuller lives.
- Eastern places emphasis on good sportsmanship on the part of student athletes, both when engaged in competition and when supporting their peers from the stands.
- Eastern offers a quality co-curricular athletic program positively affects the health and well-being of the student population, either directly through participation, or indirectly through spectatorship and school spirit.

Learn more visiting [Athletics](#).

Connecticut State Colleges & Universities

CSCU is the state's public higher education system of community colleges, regional universities, and the state's on-line college. Benefiting students, as well as Connecticut and its citizens, CSCU:

- Offers expansive access to affordable high-quality undergraduate and graduate full-time and part-time educational opportunities.
- Instills a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Promotes economic growth and workforce development.
- Provides vital services to communities and individuals.

Mission

The Connecticut State Colleges & Universities contribute to the creation of knowledge and the economic growth of the state of Connecticut by providing affordable, innovative, and rigorous programs. CSCU learning environments transform students and facilitate the opportunities for an ever-increasing number of individuals to achieve their personal and career goals.

Vision

Connecticut State Colleges & Universities will build on its long and successful history of access, diversity, and excellence by working collectively - within and across institutions - and by engaging external partners to increase the number of students pursuing and completing personally and professionally rewarding certificate and degree programs, improving their social mobility, and helping the state to meet its current and future workforce demands.

Board of Regents

A 22-member Board of Regents for Higher Education governs CSCU. Among many responsibilities, the board adopts an operating budget for the CSCU system; sets statewide tuition and student fee policies; establishes

financial aid policies; reviews, licenses, and accredits academic programs; adopts policies addressing human resources operations; and, in collaboration with institutional stakeholders, conducts searches for and selects senior leaders. In addition to governance responsibilities, the board also holds broad responsibilities for development and coordination of statewide higher education policy.

CSCU Chancellor Terrence Cheng

Terrence Cheng was appointed Chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system on May 7, 2021, and he began his appointment on July 2, 2021. He served as campus director of the University of Connecticut Stamford campus from 2016 to 2021, where he also served as a faculty member in the English department.

He has also held several academic and administrative leadership and faculty roles which include associate provost/assistant vice president, academic programs at Brooklyn College, and associate dean, School of Arts and Humanities, and chair, Department of English at Lehman College. Both institutions are part of the City University of New York.

Chancellor Cheng, a first-generation student, earned a bachelor's degree in English from Binghamton University and an MFA in fiction from the University of Miami, where he was a James Michener Fellow. He is the author of two novels: *Sons of Heaven* (2002), and *Deep in the Mountains* (2007), as well as numerous published short stories and essays. In 2005, he received a Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Windham/Willimantic, Connecticut

Windham is an eastern Connecticut community that serves as a hub for regional services. Located approximately 30 minutes east of Hartford, 20 minutes north of the Mohegan Sun Casino, and 40 minutes north of Foxwoods Casino and Resort, the town includes the historic downtown of Willimantic and three rural villages. Willimantic, an incorporated city since 1893, was consolidated with the town in 1983. The population was 24,425 at the 2020 census.

The town of Windham is made up of four parts: North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham, and Willimantic. As with many towns with abundant river waterpower, mills are a very large part of the history of the town. The mills sprang up around the Willimantic River in the borough of Willimantic, while Windham remained a farming community.

Today, Windham/Willimantic is in the midst of a renaissance. Windham, particularly, North Windham is finding a surge in development, while at the same time, Windham Center, and South Windham find the environs filling with new homeowners. The city within the town, Willimantic, is evolving daily. Currently there is a major downtown revitalization taking place that harbingers changes in the fabric of the downtown area. There are a multitude of downtown initiatives: the Victorian Neighborhood Association, The Garden on the Bridge, The Mills Art's Space, The Whitewater Initiative, the Windham Theatre Guild, ACT, and the wonders of the Third Thursday Festival are a few of the beacons of success that illuminate the bright future of the Town of Windham.

More information about Windham, CT, can be found at the following websites:

- <https://whywindhamct.com/>
- <https://windhamchamber.com/>
- <https://www2.windhamct.com/>
- <https://www.ctvisit.com/listings/town-windham>

Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile and a CV or resume. WittKieffer is assisting Eastern Connecticut State University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 29, 2024. Application materials should be submitted using WittKieffer's candidate portal.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to Lucy Leske and Luis Bertot at
ECSUPresident@wittkieffer.com

CSCU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information or criminal record.

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The material presented in this position specification should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Eastern Connecticut State University and CSCU documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.